

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 FAA-00 DOTE-00 DEAE-00

MCT-01 SY-05 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 COME-00 CAB-02

/045 W

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R 141430Z SEP 76

FM AMCONSUL MILAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4922

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L MILAN 1992

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, EV, TU, IT

SUBJECT: AIRPORT SECURITY AT MILAN MALPENSA

REF ROME 14492

SUMMARY: A SURVEY OF AIRPORT SECURITY AT MILAN'S MAPENSA AIRPORT REVEALS A NUMBER OF DEFICIENCIES. MALPENSA HANDLES MOST TRANSATLANTIC TRAFFIC AND IS SERVED BY TWA FOR PASSENGER SERVICE AS WELL AS SEABOARD & WESTERN FOR FREIGHT. END SUMMARY.

2. AN EXPERIENCED DEA POLICE OFFICER ON THE CONSULATE STAFF HAS INTERVIEWED THE TWA MANAGER AT MALPENSA AND VISITED THE SECURITY AREA IN ORDER TO RESPOND TO ROME'S SUGGESTION THAT WE OFFER AN ASSESSMENT OF AIPORT SECURITY AT MALPENSA (REFTEL PARAGRAPH 7).

3. METAL DETECTORS ARE USED TO SCREEN ALL DEPARTING PASSENGERS BEFORE ENTERING THE SANITIZED AREA. HOWEVER, ALL HAND-HELD ITEMS AND CARRY-ON LUGGAGE MUST BE PHYSICALLY EXAMINED BY A
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SECURITY OFFICER THIS IS A SLOW PROCESS AND OFTEN LEADS TO LONG

DELAYS DURING PEAK DEPARTURE PERIODS. THIS MAY CAUSE THE SEARCHES TO BE SOMEWHAT HURRIED AND LESS THOROUGH. TWA AND OTHER AIRLINES OPERATING AT MALPENSA WOULD WELCOME THE INSTALLATION OF X-RAY EQUIPMENT. WE HAVE NO INFORMATION ABOUT PLANS FOR SUCH INSTALLATION.

4. THERE IS ALSO A WEAKNESS CAUSED BY THE LACK OF A FEMALE SECURITY OFFICER. IF A FEMALE PASSENGER ACTIVATES THE METAL DETECTOR AND IS UNABLE TO JUSTIFY THE PRESENCE OF AN ABNORMAL AMOUNT OF METAL ON HER PERSON, A FEMALE AIRLINE EMPLOYEE MUST BE SUMMONED TO CONDUCT A PHYSICAL SEARCH. THIS ADDITIONAL DELAY IS AN ADDED INCENTIVE TO LESS THOROUGH SECURITY PROCEDURES. MOREOVER, ONLY TWO OF THE FOUR BOOTHS PROVIDED TO INSPECT THE CARRY-ON LUGGAGE ARE EVER IN SIMULTANEOUS USE. THIS IS APPARENTLY BECAUSE OF A SHORTAGE OF POLICE PROVIDED BY THE PUBBLICA SICUREZZA.

5. SECURITY AT THE AIRPORT IS THE JOINT RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PUBBLICA SICUREZZA (PASSPORT CONTROL AND PASSENGER SCREENING) AS WELL AS THE CARABINIERI AND GUARDIA DI FINANZA.

6. IT WOULD ALSO SEEM THAT THERE IS NO REQUIREMENT THAT SERVICE OR OTHER AIRPORT PERSONNEL ENTERING THE SANITIZED OR SECURE TRANSIT AREA WEAR OR DISPLAY IDENTIFICATION BADGES. THE SECURITY OFFICER WHO CONTROLS ACCESS SEEMS TO RELY ON PERSONAL RECOGNITION. HOWEVER, I HAVE ON MORE THAN ONE OCCASION USED THE SERVICE ENTRANCE TO THE SANITIZED AREA WITHOUT BEING CHALLENGED AT ALL OR EVEN HAVING SEEN A GUARD ON DUTY.

7. WE CONCLUDE THAT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A SEARCH OF PASSENGERS' HAND LUGGAGE IS DEPENDENT ON THE INDIVIDUAL EFFICIENCY OF EACH SECURITY OFFICER. WE ARE TOLD THAT EACH OFFICER HAS RECEIVED SPECIAL TRAINING IN THE DETECTION OF WEAPONS AND THE IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL HIJACKERS OR TERRORISTS THROUGH CHARACTER AND PROFILE STUDIES. WE BELIEVE THAT THE INSTALLATION OF EQUIPMENT SUCH AS THE BENDIX X-RAY MACHINE EMPLOYED AT ROME WOULD GREATLY INCREASE OVERALL SECURITY EFFICIENCY.

8. THE AIRPORT TERRACES AND OBSERVATION BANK COULD ALSO BE A CONFIDENTIAL

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PROBLEM. THERE IS NO RESTRAINT BARRIER ABOVE THE RAILINGS OF THE TERRACES. ACCESS TO THEM IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND PROVIDES DIRECT VIEW OF THE LOADING AND UNLOADING AREA OF AIRCRAFT. A TERRORIST COULD EASILY FIRE FROM THESE LOCATIONS OR VAULT TO THE RUNWAY AREA TO MAKE AN ATTACK, OR DROP WEAPONS TO PASSENGERS ALREADY CLEARED TO BOARD.

9. WE ARE INFORMED THAT TWA SECURITY OFFICERS MAKE ANNOUNCED

AND UNANNOUNCED INSPECTIONS AT MALPENSA AND REPORT THEIR FINDINGS TO ITALIAN SECURITY OFFICIALS. THERE ARE MONTHLY MEETINGS TO DISCUSS OPERATIONS WITH ITALIAN MANAGEMENT OFFICIALS. TWA IS VERY MUCH CONCERNED ABOUT THE QUALITY OF SECURITY AT MALPENSA AND SAYS THAT IT IS WORKING WITH AIRPORT OFFICIALS TO IMPROVE IT.

10. WE ARE NOT IN A POSITION TO GO MUCH BEYOND THESE OBSERVATIONS. WHILE THE PRINCIPAL CONCERN OF OUR DEA STAFF REGARDS SURVEILLANCE OF INCOMING LUGGAGE AND PASSENGERS WHICH IT FEELS TO BE DEFICIENT, WE HAVE LESS PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITY FOR AND LESS EXPERIENCE WITH SURVEILLANCE OF DEPARTING PASSENGERS. HOWEVER, MY PERSONAL OBSERVATION HAS BEEN THAT OUTGOING SECURITY EXAMINATIONS APPEAR TO BE HAPHAZARD AND THE PERSONNEL FREQUENTLY INATTENTIVE TO ITS DUTY.

11. WE WOULD BE HAPPY TO ARRANGE AND MUCH WELCOME A VISIT BY EXPERT IN AIRPORT SECURITY PRACTICES SHOULD WASHINGTON JUDGE THIS TO BE ADVISABLE. FINA

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, SECURITY, AIRPORTS, SURVEYS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MILAN01992
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760347-0204
From: MILAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760963/aaaacbpl.tel
Line Count: 134
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 ROME 14492
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 MAY 2004 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <31 AUG 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AIRPORT SECURITY AT MILAN MALPENSA
TAGS: PINS, EAIR, TU, IT
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006